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UNCLAS CAIRO 003841

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

FOR NEA, NEA/ELA, NEA/PI
USAID FOR ANE (GOLD) AND DCHA/DG (KAUFMAN)
TUNIS FOR MULREAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MAY 10 MEETING OF EMBASSY'S INSTITUTIONS OF
DEMOCRACY WORKING GROUP (IDWG)

REF: STATE 3177

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

1. (SBU) The Charge chaired the May 10 IDWG meeting, which was attended by the Acting DCM; USAID Deputy Director and USAID D&G staff; PA Counselor and PA staff; and ECPO staff. MEPI Tunis Regional Director Peter Mulrean also attended. The meeting opened with Mulrean's review of MEPI activities in the region, including the increasing focus on activities with a strong link to democracy promotion and support. Mulrean underscored the willingness of his office to assist Embassy Cairo in democracy promotion activities in Egypt in connection with the planned presidential and parliamentary elections.

2. (SBU) USAID briefed the IDWG on progress in making directly-funded democracy grants, with an emphasis on elections, to Egyptian and international non-governmental organizations using USAID's Annual Program Statement (APS) funding mechanism. USAID noted that it had reviewed 53 concept papers and is moving ahead with funding seven projects. USAID described the process of turning concept papers, many in Arabic, into bona fide proposals, and outlined the financial management and other technical assistance it was providing to Egyptian organizations which are applying for grants under the APS. USAID noted that it aims to fund the seven projects, for a total value of \$1.5 million, by June. USAID has another nine proposals that it aims to fund shortly thereafter. (Note: Subsequently, on May 12, USAID/Cairo and the Embassy, along with USAID/Washington and NEA/PI representatives, held a conference call to confirm that a strong consensus exists within the USG that the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute should be encouraged to seek funding for Egyptian democracy activities under the APS. End note.)

3. (SBU) USAID also briefed the IDWG on the elections technical assistance that it plans to roll out through an Indefinite Quantity Contract, noting that it aims to sign agreements with Development Associates and/or International Federation for Electoral Systems by mid-June and have activities on the ground by July. (Note: Subsequent revision to the request for proposals, resulting from the conference call described in paragraph two, have added one week to the procurement process. End note.)

4. (SBU) At the conclusion of the IDWG, Mulrean and USAID and PA staff discussed coordination of media training and support activities.

5. (U) MEPI Tunis Regional Director Peter Mulrean cleared this cable.

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GRAY